

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

24

OCI No. 3022/63

15 October 1963

VIETNAMESE SUMMARY SUPPLEMENT
(Information as of 1100 EDT)

1. Today's schedule for Madame Nhu includes taping a "Ladies of the Press" interview for New York Channel 9 presentation at 2130 Thursday; a luncheon with Newsweek magazine executives; and a speech before the Whig Cllosophic Society of Princeton University tonight.

2. Yesterday she told 200 students packed into the living room of a Radcliffe College dormitory that women are the "real power" in South Vietnam. Not only is there a paramilitary army of 200,000 women, she said, but women dominate the voting and decide in pre-election "gossip" sessions which candidates are acceptable. She cited the family code passed in 1956 which eliminated concubinage, polygamy, and divorce except by presidential approval, and gave women equal legal, political, and property rights.

She told the Radcliffe audience that hers is the first free country to accept a "showdown" with Communism, and is winning. There is little civic action in South Vietnamese universities, she said, but what there is is mostly Communist-inspired. This she dismissed as the action of "guilt-stricken young boys" from the cities whose parents have shielded them from military service, so that the girls ostracize them and only the Communists offer them a chance to demonstrate and thereby show their courage.

She and her daughter, who reportedly is considering attending an American college, had dinner in the Radcliffe student dining hall before the evening engagement at Harvard.

3. Escorted through a back door to bypass 200 noisy pickets of a Harvard "Ban-the-Bomb" group, Mme. Nhu appeared before an audience of 1,500 at the Harvard Law Forum. She debated with what the AP described as an "unfriendly, tough and verbose" panel of three Harvard law faculty members, Professor Roger Fisher, Associate Professor Stanley Hoffmann, and Mrs. Suzanne Randolph, a lecturer in government.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

After they charged that she was here on a "charm" mission to argue that "nothing at all is wrong --everything has been misquoted, misinterpreted, mis-managed or mis-emphasized," she said in reply: "What other regime has been fighting a war for the past seven years, has held five elections of universal suffrage?" She said her country was fighting "to build democracy," not simply "hiding an internal war under the cloak of anti-Communism."

She said the \$1.5 million a day repeatedly cited as US aid to South Vietnam includes the entire cost of the guerrilla war as well as expenses for operations of the US Seventh Fleet, and that Diem had asked for the withdrawal of some US personnel in Saigon, not as part of an "America-go-home campaign," but to cut the costs. Instead, she said, 3,000 more Americans arrived.

"Americans bring their houses on their backs," she complained. "They do not live like us...austerely as us...they live at great expense." These remarks brought hissing from some members of the audience, which otherwise was apparently more receptive than the opposing debaters.

"Too many people," she added, "believe that American aid arrives in South Vietnam in big bags full of dollars, and that the president of Vietnam gives it to his brothers. This is not true."

4. Before flying to the Boston area, Madame Nhu was the guest of New York Times publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger at an off-the-record luncheon in the Times Building. After her Princeton engagement tonight, she is to fly to Washington, where she says she will again attempt to see her estranged father, former ambassador Tran Van Chuong.

5. A government-controlled vernacular daily in Saigon-Cholon Monday described Mme. Nhu's trip as a "hurricane" sweeping over the US which has caused deep embarrassment to the US Government.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

6. Princeton Assistant Professor Arash Bormanshinov says a group of Buddhist monks, all naturalized Americans and including no natives of South Vietnam, will picket Mme. Nhu's appearance at Princeton tonight.

7. Yesterday's Supplement cited Mme. Nhu's claim on Sunday that according to Buddhist figures only one million of South Vietnam's 40 million are Buddhists. Madame Nhu obviously meant to say 14, not 40.